MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

28 MARCH 1986

Libya

Commenting on the U.S. decision to terminate the 6th Fleet's exercises off the Libyan coast, Tripoli television noted JANA's political editor's view that U.S. officials were "compelled" to withdraw the 6th Fleet because Libya's "firmness" and "brave defiance" had led to an "acute military confrontation which the Americans did not take into account." The political editor also maintained that support for Libya throughout the world had a "decisive effect" in forcing the cancellation of the U.S. exercises. Voice of Greater Arab Homeland radio likewise spoke of a "glittering victory" in the Gulf of Sidra, claiming that the Libyans were able to "match" the United States, "which they fought and triumphed over."

The radio again exhorted the Arab masses to destroy U.S. interests and targets in the Arab world, adding that no American in the region is an innocent visitor or a person without a "spying or sabotage mission." The radio also broadcast a support message to Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi from the Tunisian "revolutionary force," which declared its readiness to form "suicide squads."

As for Libyan losses in the U.S. attacks, TANJUG cited an eyewitness account that at least 8 Libyans were killed when their missile boat was hit, while JANA noted a Spanish press report that 16 Libyan sailors were rescued by a Spanish oil tanker.

Lebanon

A Lebanese Forces Executive Committee statement broadcast by Voice of Lebanon radio accused the Syrian Army of participating in recent artillery attacks on Christian areas, causing "dozens" of casualties. The committee linked this military escalation with the series of car-bomb explosions in Christian districts. The statement reaffirmed the Lebanese Forces' willingness to take part in a cease-fire and urged Arab states to act quickly to stop Syrian military activity in Lebanon. The Lebanese Forces' accusations followed further shelling across combat lines in the Al-Matn area, according to Beirut radio.

In Israel's security zone, an army of southern Lebanon soldier was killed by a roadside bomb 28 March, Jerusalem radio reported. A PLO spokesman announced earlier that 10 people were killed and 12 were injured in the 27 March Israeli air raid on Fatah targets near Sidon, Radio Monte Carlo noted. Fatah claimed responsibility for the katyusha attack on Qiryat Shemona that morning, according to AFP.

For Israel's part, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres stated that the air raid was part of Israel's campaign to prevent incidents like the attack on Qiryat Shemona, IDF radio reported. Commenting on the raid, Jerusalem radio said that nearly 1,000 "terrorists" from various Palestinian organizations have returned to the Sidon area.

Iran-Iraq War

Iranian air defenses shot down three Iraqi MIG-23's when Iraqi aircraft attacked a "huge" Iranian naval convoy crossing the Gulf 27 March, Iran announced in a war report broadcast by Tehran television. Although the report maintained that the convoy arrived safely at its destination on the Al-Faw peninsula, an Iraqi communique broadcast by Voice of the Masses radio maintained that Iraqi planes "wiped out" the convoy, which consisted of seven large supply ships escorted by nine other boats. The Iraqi communique also announced Iraqi air raids on the Ganaveh oil terminal and on three Iranian military camps.

In another communique broadcast by the radio, the Iraqi command claimed successes on the northern front, asserting that Iraqi troops recaptured 14 "strategic" mountain peaks from the Iranians in a "stormy, sweeping attack" 27-28 March.

Israel-Egypt: Tabah Talks

No progress was made in the latest round of Tabah talks as the Egyptians went back on a previous agreement and hardened their position, Jerusalem radio reported. Nevertheless, Israeli delegation leader Avraham Tamir stressed that the situation is not critical, asserting that it "should not be regarded as a catastrophe" if the dispute is referred to the Inner Cabinet following the next round of talks in Cairo, according to *HA'ARETZ*.

Algerian-Soviet Relations

Reporting on Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid's talks with CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, Algiers radio noted that the two sides signed a long-term program for economic, trade, scientific, and technical cooperation, adding that they also expressed satisfaction with the "excellent" state of bilateral relations. In related remarks broadcast by the radio, the Algerian foreign minister disclosed that military issues were discussed in the talks on bilateral relations.

The Qatari paper *AL-RAYAH* reported earlier that Algeria is seeking to strengthen its air defenses by purchasing modern Soviet SAM's as well as a sophisticated French radar system, according to QNA.

PLO-Jordan

Jordanian authorities have denied a report by the Kuwaiti paper *AL-ANBA' that Jordan has asked the PLO to close its main* offices in Amman, PLO deputy military commander Khalil al-Wazir disclosed in a statement cited by Radio Monte Carlo. Al-Wazir said Jordanian Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i has assured him that the *AL-ANBA'* story was unfounded.

Pakistan-DRA

The Soviet Union has given "very positive signs" of readiness to negotiate a troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, Pakistani President Mohammad Ziaul Haq stated in a *LE MONDE* interview cited by AFP. Meanwhile, a bomb explosion in a Peshawar refugee hostel killed or wounded 21 people, according to AFP, which noted that Pakistani police believe DRA secret agents were responsible. In another development, the Pakistani Foreign Office protested to the DRA over recent cross-border artillery fire which injured nine people, Karachi radio noted.

FBIS **DAILY REPORT**

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Foreign Ministry Statement on U.S.-Libya Conflict

LD271910 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; date not given — read by announcer]

[Text] Based on reports from the world media, the actions of the United States against the independence, territorial integrity, and national sovereignty of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah and against its patriotic and anti-imperialist leadership have recently reached a dangerous level; this is a result of the aggressive military operations against this developing and nonaligned country. The U.S. Navy and Air Force exercises in and around the Libyan coastal waters were carried out as a pretext for a clash with Libya and have recently been transformed into direct military aggression. This clear aggression takes place in continuation of terrorist activities against the Libyan leadership which follows a progressive and anti-imperialist policy, democratic objectives, and independent growth.

The recent U.S. Navy operations against Libya are examples of state terrorism which follow the failure of the Washington administration to exert economic pressure and intimidation by military exercises, false accusations against the Libyan leadership, and other hostile actions; this failure is due to the brave and just resistance of the Libyan people and leadership. All these actions show that without paying attention to peace-loving public opinion Washington is still willing to disrupt the security and stability of North Africa.

The recent aggressive action by Ronald Reagan's administration against the fraternal Libyan country contravenes the accepted norms and recognized principles of interstate rights and is an open violation of the UN Charter, the objectives and principles of the Nonaligned Movement, the Islamic Conference Organization, and the Organization of African Unity.

The recent U.S. military aggressions against Libya once again show that the Washington leadership only talks about the need to solve regional tension in the world but in practice fans the flames of such tensions; by doing so it not only disturbs the tranquillity of these regions but also endangers international peace and security. The DRA strongly condemns this U.S. aggression, as this U.S. act has also been condemned by progressive and peace-loving forces in the world, liberation movements, and aware mankind. The DRA, which itself has become the target of aggression by imperialism and its agents, wants an immediate end to the U.S. aggression and provocation in the internal affairs of Libya and demands that the officials in the Washington administration stop continuing hostile and provocative actions against Libya. By expressing solidarity and fraternity with the Libyan Arab nation, the Government and people of the DRA announce that they stand beside them in these difficult times and resolutely demand an immediate end to such open aggression against Libya.

FRG Envoy Summoned To Protest Bundestag Talks

LD271732 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto
1530 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] The charge d'affaires of the FRG Embassy was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at 1230 today and the following protest note was handed to him by the director of the Fifth Political Section:

Notwithstanding the repeated reminders by the DRA authorities concerning the broader organization of the anti-Afghan subversive activities in the FRG, recently the right-wing political circles of that country initiated so-called talks on the Afghanistan question in that country's parliament — the Bundestag. A number of counterrevolutionary professional saboteurs and reactionary elements condemned by history took part as specialists in this propaganda meeting, where the anti-Afghan and inhuman foul aims of continuing the reactionary and imperialist undeclared war against the DRA were crystal clear.

Also the ambassador of the military and antipeoples regime of Pakistan was allowed, through lies and untrue utterences, to justify the sins of its government's open interference and aggressions against the DRA and ask its reactionary and interventionist friends for further assistance.

The official FRG authorities in accordance with the hostile policy of that government's country against the DRA, by convocating such anti-Afghan meetings, follows the policy of the U.S. Government in this regard. The remarks of Hans-Dietrich Genscher, FRG minister of foreign affairs, on 20 March 1986, and the participation of Stavenhagen Lutz, minister of state in the FRG Ministry of Foreign Affairs, are outstanding examples of this.

The adventurist and extremist FRG political circles are distorting the truth by spreading fabrications and lies such as the violation of human rights in Afghanistan. In order to prevent the decisive and inevitable elimination of the traitorous counterrevolutionary bands they ask their reactionary friends for assistance.

The visit by such notorious elements as Volker Neumann, a member of the Bundestag, to Pakistan and his illegal and provocative entry in to DRA territory proves well how the rights of working peoples and their national sovereignty are trampled by the legislative representatives of the FRG who claim to support human rights.

The DRA Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemns the provocative and hostile actions by the official authorities of that country as an open and brazen interference in the internal affairs of the DRA and therefore lodges the strongest protest. It demands that the FRG Government firmly refrain from such interference in order not to further aggravate relations between the two countries by those sort of deeds.

PDPA Central Committee Holds 17th Plenary Session

LD272325 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1530 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] The 17th plenary session of the PDPA Central Committee was held this morning. It discussed the historic 27th Congress of the CPSU — the congress of peace, progress, and creativity — the current duties of the PDPA, and the basic stages of the DRA's socioeconomic development for this year.

Babrak Karmal, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the DRA Revolutionary Council, presented the basic report of the plenum as the first item on the agenda.

In this report, Babrak Karmal pointed to the historic importance of the 27th CPSU Congress in the struggle for peace and the prevention of a nuclear war, and the creation of a universal system for international security. He stressed that special attention was devoted to the increasing role of the national emancipation movements and to national and democratic revolution in the political report of M.S. Gorbachev. He said the PDPA has fully and completely approved this report, particularly the principled stand of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government in relation to the issue around Afghanistan.

Babrak Karmal analyzed and assessed the implementation of the decisions of the 16th PDPA Central Committee Plenum and specified the current duties of the party, the government, the social and economical organizations, and the armed forces in the socioeconomic, political, and military fields.

Zohur Razmju, candidate member of the Politburo, secretary of the Kabul City party committee and head of Kabul district; Shah Mohammad Dost, minister of foreign affairs; Engineer Nazar Muhammad, minister of construction affairs; Muhammad Faruq, general commander of the DRA border troops; and Muhammad Sharif, secretary of the Balkh Province party committee, discussed the basic report and approved it.

The draft resolution of the 17th PDPA Central Committee Plenum as the first item on the agenda was then unanimously approved.

Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, member of the PDPA Central Committee Politburo and chairman of the DRA Council of Ministers, then presented a report about the second item on the agenda.

Sahar Pordeli, chairman of the Central Council of DRA Trade Unions; Sher Jan Mazduryar, minister of transport; Khoday Nur Bawar, chairman of the DRA peasants cooperatives; Engineer Aziz, minister of light industries and foodstuff; Jalal, governor of Herat Province; and Faruq Pasdar, secretary of Baghlan province party committee, then spoke about the first and second items on the agenda. They expressed full support and approval of the first and second items on the agenda.

The work of the 17th Plenum of the PDPA Central Committee ended in the afternoon after the concluding speech by Babrak Karmal, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the DRA Revolutionary Council.

Heads and deputy heads of PDPA Central Committee's departments; heads of districts; secretaries of provincial party committees; members of the Council of Ministers; chairmen of executive committees; provincial governors; and a number of party cadres also took part in the work of the plenum.

A summary of Babrak Karmal's basic report and the report by Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, presented to the 17th PDPA Central Committee Plenum, will then be published in the press.

SPA: Mujahidin Attack Jalalabad Airport 18 Mar

GF271256 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1130 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] Islamabad, 27 Mar (SPA) — Afghan mujahidin on 18 March attacked Jalalabad Airport in eastern Afghanistan, destroying two helicopters and five tanks.

The Afghan news agency, AAP, stated that a newly built terminal at the airport also was destroyed.

A group of mujahidin armed with BM-12 rockets on the same day attacked a detachment of the Afghan Government Army in Jalalabad, killing several soldiers.

Reports on Reaction to U.S.-Libya Dispute

Official Spokesman Comments

BK271540 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 1501 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Excerpt] Briefing newsmen on 27 March, the official spokesman said that the Libyan charge d'affaires today met Secretary (external relations), N.P. Jain and apprised him of the situation following attacks by the United States on Libyan patrol boats and a missile battery in Libyan territory. Jain drew his attention to the statement issued on 26 March and also to discussions held in the Nonaligned Coordinating Bureau meeting at New York which met under the chairmanship of India on 26 March 1986 and passed a resolution on this situation. The U.S. ambassador separately met the foreign secretary today and the foreign secretary reiterated India's grave concern at the attacks on Libyan missile patrol boats as well as a missile battery in Libyan territory.

The Soviet ambassador today called on External Affairs Minister Bali Ram Bhagat and apprised him of Soviet concern.

The External Affairs Minister also referred to India's grave concern at developments.

Nonaligned Bureau Statement

BK271543 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 1457 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] Following is the text of the communique adopted by the NAM [Nonaligned Movement] Coordinating Bureau in its meeting held at New York on March 26 regarding the situation in the central Mediterranean:

"The Coordinating Bureau of the Movement of Non Aligned countries met in urgent session in New York on 26 March to consider the grave situation which has arisen in the central Mediterranean. It heard a statement by the representative of the Socialist Peoples Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah concerning United States provocations and aggressions against the Jamahiriyah and the grave violation of territorial integrity of that country. The bureau noted with grave concern recent United States manoeuvres in the Gulf of Sidra and attacks on Libyan vessels as well as Libyan territory. These acts of aggression posed a serious threat not only to regional security but also to international peace and stability.

The bureau recalled that the heads of state or government of non aligned countries meeting in New Delhi in 1983 had noted with concern 'that policies of intervention and interference, pressure and threat or use of force continued to be pursued against many non aligned countries with dangerous consequences for peace and stability' and had called upon all states 'to abide by the principle that force or threat of force will not be used against territorial integrity or political and economic independence of states.' It further recalled that in its meeting of 6 Ferbaury 1986 the bureau had 'cautioned against any precipitate steps by the United States of America as such situations were best resolved through dialogue and not through pressure or use of force.'

The bureau also recalled the resolution adopted by foreign ministers of the Arab League council at its 85th session held in Tunis from 24 to 26 March 1986 which had forcefully condemned the use of aggression against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah considering it as a grave violation of the sovereignty, independence and safety of the Libyan country.' [quotation mark as received]

The bureau expressed grave concern over the provocations and use of force against the Socialist Peoples Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah. The bureau condemned these acts of aggression which created a dangerous escalation of the situation in the central Mediterranean and endangered international peace and security. The U.S. action was all the more condemnable since by virtue of its position as a permanent member of the Security Council it has primary responsibility for maintenance of international peace and stability and to abide by principles of the UN Charter.

The bureau demanded an urgent cessation of military operations that endanger the peace and security of the region and particularly the security and territorial integrity of the Socialist Peoples Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah as well as international peace and stability. It affirmed its full support for and solidarity with the Socialist Peoples Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, a fellow non aligned country, in safeguarding its independence, stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity.' [quotation mark as received]

The meeting was chaired by Indian representative to UN Shrin Krishnan.

Punjab Cabinet Holds Emergency Meeting

Resolves to Fight Militants

BK271249 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] The Punjab cabinet in an emergency meeting in Chandigarh today reiterated the resolve of the state government to deal firmly with the antinational and antisocial forces indulging in disruptive activities. A meeting presided over by the chief minister, Mr Surjit Singh Barnala, called upon the Akali Dal and the people of Punjab to fight these forces and help in ushering in an era of peace and prosperity.

The cabinet condemned the attempts by an unruly mob to violate the sanctity of the Holla Mohalla [religious festival] congregation at Anandpur Saheb yesterday. It unanimously endorsed the stand taken by the chief minister in dealing with these disruptive elements who had been rejected by the people at the recent elections.

Chief Minister Comments

BK271617 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Excerpts] The Punjab cabinet in an emergency meeting in Chandigarh today reiterated the resolve of the state government to deal firmly with the antinational and antisocial forces indulging in disruptive activities. The meeting presided over by the chief

minister, Mr Surjit Singh Barnala, called upon the Akali Dal and the people of Punjab to fight these forces and help in ushering in an era of peace and prosperity.

The meeting regretted that at a time when the government is engaged in the task of healing the wounds, these elements have launched a selfish and ruthless campaign against the state itself.

Later, talking to newsmen Mr Barnala said that the police and paramilitary forces acted with full restraint. He said yesterday's incident seems to be preplanned action and the arrest of Mukham Singh has been used by them as an excuse. He denied that any state cabinet minister in the recent past met Mr Mukham Singh.

Mr Barnala declared that such incidents will not be tolerated in future and stern action will be taken against all disruptive forces. He said All India Sikh Student Federation and Damdami Taksal were allowed to hold congregation at Anandpur Saheb in keeping with the past democratic traditions.

Mr Barnala said intensive patrolling by police and paramilitary forces is being further strengthened and extended in some more districts.

The Punjab Pradesh [state] Congress-I Committee president, Mr Beyant Singh, has called upon the Akali Dal and all secular forces to fight against divisive forces unitedly and help restore communal harmony in the state. He was talking to newsmen after his visit to Ludhiana.

Spokesman on Police Shooting in Anandpur Saheb
BK270415 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Excerpts] In Chandigarh, an emergency meeting of the Punjab cabinet is taking place later this morning.

As reported earlier, 5 persons were killed and 29 others injured, including 11 policemen, in the police firing on the unruly mob in Anandpur Saheb yesterday.

An official spokesman clarified that the All India Sikh Students Federation and the Damdami Taksal [Sikh fundamentalist religious school] activists had been inciting the people against the government on a diwan [religious seat] at Anandpur Saheb for the last 3 days. He said the activists gave an ultimatum to the government to release the Damdami Taksal leader, Mr Mokham Singh, by 1000 yesterday. Mr Mokham Singh and three others were arrested by the Amritsar police on Tuesday in connection with the case registered against them some time back. The spokesman said at about 1400 yesterday, these activists armed with swords and spears and firearms surged toward diwan organized by the Akali Dal. He said the mob was declared an unlawful assembly on the public address system, and efforts to control them through persuation, lathi [baton] charge, and lobbying of tear gas shells failed to control them. The spokesman said in view of the grave and eminent danger to the life and property, including those of the VIP's and the general public, the police resorted to firing to control the situation.

10 Killed in Ludhiana Shooting; Army on Alert
BK280904 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0830 GMT 28 Mar 86

[Text] In Punjab, 10 persons were killed and about 10 injured at Ludhiana when 5 youths, suspected to be terrorists, riding a motorcycle and scooter opened indiscriminate firing. The incident took place in the (Rishi) ground and Damoria bridge area early this monring. The district administration has clamped indefinite curfew on the city as a precautionary measure. The police in Ludhiana and surrounding areas have launched a manhunt for the culprits. An alarm has been sounded all over the state in view of this incident.

An official spokesman said in Chandigarh that additional police and paramilitary forces have been rushed to Ludhiana. He said the army has been asked to stand by. Meanwhile, curfew in Anandpur Sahib has been extended till Monday.

Five senior Akali leaders in a joint statement have called upon the people of the state to close their ranks and unitedly face the challenge posed by antinational elements to the security of the state. Signatories to the state are: the party president, Mr Surjit Singh Barnala; the former chief minister, Mr Prakash Singh Badal; the former SGPC [Shiroamani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee — Sikh temples management], Mr G. S. Tohra; and the state minsiters, Mr Balwant Singh and Mr Suginder Singh. Expressing their concern at the Ludhiana shooting incident, they alleged that these forces are acting on behest of a foreign power. They appealed to the people to maintain their cool and exhibit total unity, solidarity, and determination in the face of the challenge posed by the enemies of the state's pace and prosperity.

Meanwhile, the chief minsiter, Mr Surjit Singh Barnala, has directed all units of Akali Dal to seek cooperation of all sections of society to maintain peace and amity in the state despite grave provocation. He gave a call for the closure of all shops and commercial establishments in the state today as a mark of sympathy and respect to the victims of terrorist violence.

In Jullundur, the relaxation in curfew had to be curtailed to 3 hours today following tension that developed in the city with the news of the shootout incident in Ludhiana. Relaxation for 6 hours was given earlier from 0700 in the old city. However, no untoward incident has been reported from curfew-bound aras.

Air Force Transport Plane Missing Since 25 March
BK271630 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Excerpt] An AN-32 transport aircraft of the Indian Air Force [IAF] with seven crew is reported missing since the evening of last Tuesday [25 March]. The aircraft was on a flight from Muscat, Oman, to Jamnagar. The aircraft took off at 1328 hours Indian standard time [0758 GMT] from Muscat and made the last radio contact at 1445 hours. An aerial search was launched on Tuesday evening by the IAF and the Indian Navy aircraft. Naval ships in the area have also joined in the search operation. The police authorities in the coastal areas have been alerted. A court of enquiry has been ordered.

Editorial Urges Continuing Talks With Pakistan

BK271125 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 18 Mar 86 p 6

[Editorial: "Not Irretrievable"]

[Text] The Prime Minister's meeting with his Pakistani counterpart, Mr Junejo over the weekend in Stockholm provided a brief but useful opportunity for a frank exchange of views. Mr Gandhi plainly explained to Mr Junejo that it would be premature for him to visit Pakistan, which he is willing to do on principle, until there is clear evidence of satisfactory progress in the normalisation and improvement of Indo-Pakistani relations. In particular, he expressed misgivings about Pakistan's continued training of and assistance to Punjab terrorists, its stand on Jammu and Kashmir, and the lack of headway in implementing some of the other heads of understanding [as published] arrived at after the Delhi summit last December. According to Mr Gandhi, Mr Junejo said that his Government would do something about these matters. President Zia has meanwhile once again denied any Pakistani interference in (East) Punjab and reiterated that the Kashmir question has been "set aside" until other problems are resolved but that Islamabad's position is that the matter should be settled in accordance with the UN resolutions and the Simla Agreement.

Indian accusations and Pakistani protestations of innocence about interference in Punjab have been bandied about for months. More effectively, over the past week BSF [Border Security Force] patrols have killed seven "miscreants", said to be Pakistanis, trying to cross the Punjab and Jammu border; two suspected terrorist infiltrators were apprehended, while a number of other intruders have been engaged and either injured in firing or beaten back. This is a welcome new development and indicates greater vigilance and determination in plugging what has been all too porus a border. Sustained action of this kind will soon exact a price that terrorists or other intruders will no longer be willing to pay for any purpose or at anybody's behest. As for Jammu and Kashmir, the UN resolutions are dead and nothing can revive them. The removal of the G.M. Shah government is only a first step towards cleaning up the internal mess that was wilfully created in the State. The Simla Agreement calls for a peaceful bilateral settlement of the Kashmir question. Follow-up on the trade talks Mr V.P. Singh had with Dr Mahbubul Haq has been slow and there is as yet no evidence that Pakistan is moving to reopen the Munabao-Khokrapar railway between Rajasthan and Sind as decided. This is disappointing but, hopefully, not irretrievable. Pakistan's expression of concern for the minorities in India and Mr Baliram Bhagat's sharp rejoinder should close that chapter as both sides are pledged not to interfere in the internal affairs of the other. One unfortunate consequence of Pakistan's comments on recent riots in India, however, has been attacks on minority groups in Sind and, apparently, a yet tiny trickle of some frightened families into Rajasthan. This is a dangerous development and must be firmly nipped in the bud.

President Zia has admitted to a "cooling off" in Indo-Pakistan relations but no reverse as such. It is necessary to retrieve lost ground. For this, the Pakistan Government needs to ponder what Mr Gandhi told Mr Junejo and review its stance and strategy. The plea by opposition elements in Pakistan that India rebuff President Zia and refuse to negotiate a treaty of non-aggression, friendship and cooperation is, however, mistaken and should be ignored. Nothing is to be gained by such a stand-off. Nor should the machinery of the joint commission be allowed once more to creak to a standstill. Howsoever slow and painful the movement, there is only one sane direction in which to move: forward.

PATRIOT Views Effort for Khalistan-Tamil Link Up

BK271406 Delhi PATRIOT in English 15 Mar 86 p 4

[Editorial: "Hypocritical"]

[Text] The offer of the U.S.-based Khalistani protagonists to help secure a "separate homeland" for Sri Lanka Tamils is utterly cynical. The hypocrisy of this proposition, apart from its extremely dangerous implications, is so palpable that the Tamils in exile in India had no hesitation in categorically rejecting it forthwith. The so-called offer was made by retired Indian army general and secretary of the self-styled World Sikh Organisation, Jaswant Singh Bhullar. The platform for this mischief was provided by an outfit which describes itself as "Hindustan Front" as has been improvised by Dr Subramaniam Swamy. After serving as the economic brains trust of the then Jana Sangh and later doing a stint with the Janata Party, Dr Swamy returned to where his heart belongs, that is, Harvard. The crocodile tears shed for the sufferings of Lanka Tamils on this occasion could not hide the main objective of launching another round of anti-India campaign in the U.S. when the bait of "Khalistan" is wearing thin its spurious gloss among the Sikhs abroad. Having experienced a threat of their growing isolation in Britain and increasing apprehensions about their activities in Canada — the two hotbeds of anti-India conspiracy — the Khalistani protagonists are now engaged in an attempt to revive their anti-India propaganda campaign in the United States.

Dr Subramaniam Swamy's latest mischief is his plan to set up a committee in India to defend the "fundamental rights of the Sikhs abroad" who had left India in the wake of the Bluestar Operation. He did not, of course, disclose that dubious persons like Bhullar had left India before the Bluestar Operation, nor did he acknowledge the provisions of fundamental rights provided in the Indian Constitution which guarantee all that any group of people may aspire for. Of course, those who campaign day in and day out against the sovereignty, unity and integrity of their country cannot be allowed to cover their designs behind the facade of "fundamental rights". Moreover, it is now no longer a secret that there are forces in the U.S., starting from Campers' school for training armed conspirators, saboteurs and murderers, to more sophisticated official organs engaged in cover and overt attempts at destabilisation in India. Here is one more outfit subserving the same design.

The political objective of this mischievous attempt to link the Khalistani terrorists abroad and the cause of Sri Lanka Tamils in exile, is to embroil India somehow in Sri Lanka's ethnic turmoil and thus justify the activities of the Khalistani supporters. Neither the people in this country nor those who are fighting against the genocide of Sri Lanka Tamils can be made a pawn in this dangerous game.

Ziaul Haq Discusses Afghanistan, India

AU271615 Paris AFP in English 1608 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] Paris, March 27 (AFP) — The Soviet Union has given "very positive signs" of its readiness to negotiate a troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, Pakistani President Mohammad Ziaul Haq said in an interview published Thursday in the Paris evening daily *LE MONDE*.

"The Soviet Union wants to cooperate in the search for a political solution" in Afghanistan, General Zia said, adding that Moscow "can not allow the existence of an Afghanistan that would be hostile to it."

"We say: 'The Soviets must withdraw, Afghanistan must be their friend, and the Afghans must be allowed to settle their own problems and choose the type of government they want,' " he said.

Asked if he thought Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev might review Soviet policy toward Afghanistan and consider the Soviet invasion a mistake, Gen. Zia said: "It is very possible that Mr. Gorbachev has changed his mind.

"Why oppose the rest of the world, why alienate Moslem countries and Southeast Asia with expansionist policies?" he asked.

On Pakistan's relations with India Gen. Zia said they were "subject to convulsions."

"But I am impressed by Mr. Gandhi," he added, referring to Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

"I think our cooperation will become stronger the long run," he said. "Pakistan is not a threat to India."

Protest Lodged on Afghan Border Shelling

BK271732 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] The Afghan Armed Forces at 1600 hours on the 24th of this month fired 16 rounds of artillery which landed 7 miles north of Nawagai in (Bazmor) Agency. No casualties or damage were reported. Later, on the 26th of this month at 1630 hours the Afghan Armed Forces fired 12 rounds of mortar which landed in and around Chaman. As a result, nine civilians were injured.

The Afghan charge d'affaires was summoned to the foreign office this morning and a strong protest was lodged over these unprovoked attacks.

Li Xiannian Arrives in Karachi for Overnight Stay

BK271720 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] President Li Xiannian of the People's Republic of China was given a rousing welcome when he arrived in Karachi tonight on a brief visit. President Mohammad Ziaul Haq received the Chinese president and Madam Li at the airport. Two children attired in national dress presented bouquets to the distinguished guest. The Sind governor, Lieutenent General Jahandad Khan, Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, Sind cabinet ministers, senior officials, elected people's representatives, and Chinese diplomats were also present at the airport to greet the guest.

The Chinese president, who is accompanied by a 70-member entourage, is on his way back home from a 5-nation Asian and African tour which took him to Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Somalia, and Madgascar. President Li will leave for Beijing tomorrow morning after an overnight stay in Karachi.

Leaves for Beijing

BK280617 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 0600 GMT 28 Mar 86

[Text] President Li Xiannian of the People's Republic of China left Karachi for Beijing this morning after an overnight stay. President Mohammad Ziaul Haq; Sind Governor Lieutenent General Jahandad Khan, retired; Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan; provincial ministers; and high officials saw him off at the airport. Two children in traditional dress presented bouquets to the Chinese president and Madam Li. President Li Xiannian, who is accompanied by a 17-member entourage, is on his way back home from an Asian and African tour.

Bomb Explodes in Afghan Refugee Hostel in Peshawar

BK271505 Hong Kong AFP in English 1343 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] Islamabad, March 27 (AFP) — A powerful bomb ripped through an Afghan refugee hostel in Peshawar Thursday, killing four people and injuring 17, police said.

The explosion at mid-day in the Nasir Hotel, known for serving traditional Afghan food, totally destroyed the two-storey hostel and restaurant. The device went off when Afghan refugees were crowding the restaurant for lunch.

Pakistani police believed Afghan secret agents placed the device, suspected by Pakistani officials to have been a Soviet-made time-bomb. According to police sources, the bomb was placed in the ground floor of the refugee-run hotel and the entire building has fallen into ruins. Police cordoned off the area and rescue work was in progress.

The dead were said to include three Afghan refugees. A majority of those wounded were also displaced Afghans sheltering in Peshawar, near the Afghan border. The blast followed an explosioin near a refugee commissioners office in Peshawar Wednesday night which wounded two Pakistanis, police said.

Karachi Notes Explosion

BK271519 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] According to a press note issued in Peshawar this evening 4 persons were killed and 14 others were injured in an explosion at a tea house in the Namakmandi market of Peshawar. The

injured were admitted to the Lady Reading Hospital where they are reported to be in satisfactory condition.

Opposition Party Seeks Ziaul Haq Court Martial

GF271615 Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 22 Mar 86 p 1, 6

[Report by *JASARAT* correspondent]

[Excerpts] Haidarabad, 21 March -- Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani, chief of Jamiat Ulema-e Pakistan, has said that if Prime Minister Junejo considers himself fully authorized and determined, then he should court martial army chief General Ziaul Haq, who has surrendered 300 square miles of Pakistani territory to India. He was addressing a large crowd today at the Qila ground.

He said that Pakistan was passing through a very sensitive period. We have today a president, a commander in chief and martial law, yet India not only occupies a 300-square mile area of Siachen Glacier, but is thinking of making further advances. Afghan aircraft have violated our territory 800 times but nobody challenges them. We strongly protest against this. Gen Ziaul Haq draws a salary of 4 crore of rupees a year. Now the nation must decide whether we need such a caretaker because we have seen that even in his presence thieves have been making inroads into our homes. He added that an inquiry should be launched into this wretched state of our defenses and the commander in chief of the army should be court martialed.

Maulana Noorani said: We tell those elements chanting the slogans of breaking Pakistan that they should leave Pakistan. God willing, Pakistan will never break. The nation has already seen the fate of those who have broken the country once. Those who are nourishing the idea of breaking it again will not escape the wrath of God Almighty. He added: We do not need the generals who draw millions of rupees as a salary and usurp the general public of their rights.

He said tha' a new martial law is still there in disguise. Since a commander in chief can impose martial law, therefore Gen Ziaul Haq is keeping the office of the chief of the army staff with him. Maulana Noorani added: We do not want the country to take the path of violence. We want to carry on the movement of peacefully implementing the prophet's system.

NEPAL

Editorial Views Trade, Cooperation Talks With PRC

BK271119 Katmandu THE RISING NEPAL in English 16 Mar 86 p 2

[Editorial: "Important Meeting"]

[Text] In view of the long history of cooperation between Nepal and China for the economic development of the Kingdom and the prospects for further increasing the economic and trade relations between the two countries, the second meeting of the Nepal-China Inter-Governmental Economic and Trade Committee scheduled to begin here today (Sunday) assumes great importance. Nepal and China have a long history of cooperation in the development activities. China has helped Nepal in its efforts for economic development in many ways. Some of the development activities implemented in Nepal with the assistance of China include the road construction, transport, water resources, industries, water conservancy and irrigation among others. During the first meeting of the committee held in Beijing in December 1984, China had shown interest in Nepal's proposal for joint investment in or concessional loans for setting up of industries designed to produce import substitutes in Nepal. In the industrial field China has also helped Nepal set up the Bansbari leather and shoe factory, Hetauda cotton textile industry, brick and tile factories, among others.

Nepal's exports to China in the year 1982-83 amounted to about 700 thousand rupees. Imports from China totalled 458 million rupees that year. Although imports have fallen to 255 million rupees in 1984-85, the export scenario has not been satisfactory as it leaves a wide trade deficit for Nepal. However, these figures do not include Nepal's trade with Tibet Autonomous Region of China. The Chinese delegation headed by the Assistant Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade, Mr Wang Wendong, has already arrived in Katmandu for the meeting. The Assistant Finance Minister, Mr Daman Dhoj Chand, is to lead the Nepalese delegation at the talks. The meeting beginning today is an appropriate forum to discuss the possible ways and means by which to correct the trade situation on the one hand and further develop them in the future on the other, besides discussing other areas of economic cooperation. Since Nepal is trying to develop import substitute and export oriented industries to promote exports and reduce imports and offers a number of incentives for joint investment in industrial ventures in the country, the meeting is yet another occasion to discuss future cooperation between the two countries in this direction as well. Given the friendly relations subsisting between Nepal and China there is every reason to hope that the meeting will be a successful one.

SRI LANKA

Talks With Tamils Reportedly To Begin 30 Mar

BK251524 Hong Kong AFP in English 1510 GMT 25 Mar 86

[Text] Madras, India, March 25 (AFP) — The Sri Lankan Government is trying to reach an accord with Tamil separatists without Indian involvement and fresh talks will likely begin in Bangkok Sunday [30 March], Tamil sources said here Tuesday.

But major Tamil groups involved in earlier talks dissociated themselves from the reported move.

The sources said Sri Lanka National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali was sounding out various Tamil separatist groups through a London-based body on the move.

They identified the new mediatory organisation involved as Quaker Peace and Service, a quasi-religious body, and said the talks were likely to begin in Bangkok on Sunday.

No immediate comment was available on the report from Indian or Sri Lankan officials.

Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi succeeded in bringing the half-dozen major separatist groups and Colombo to direct negotiations last year in Thimpu. Two rounds of talks were held in the Bhutanese capital in June and August but they broke up without an agreement.

Observers said the reported Colombo move to resume talks with the Tamils without Indian involvement — for the first time since the ethnic problem erupted in Sri Lanka — followed Delhi's repeated firm statements recently accusing Sri Lankan troops of attacking innocent Tamils.

India said it would no longer take any role in a negotiated settlement unless the killings were stopped.

But all the major Tamil groups who took part in the Thimpu rounds of talks have firmly dissociated themselves with the reported Colombo move.

The sources said the Peace and Services Asian Secretary, N. Pamamurthy, had contacted the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) and other separatist group leaders living here on the Colombo plan. Mr Ramamurthy had sought their acquiescence to fresh talks without Indian involvement.

Spokesman for the TULF and the Eelam National Liberation Front, [ENLF] which groups four militant separatist bodies, stoutly denied their participation in the projected talks.

TULF Secretary General Appapillai Amirthalingam confirmed to AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE that such a move for talks was in the offing between Colombo and some leftist Tamil groups, but he did not name these groups.

K. Balakumar, official spokesman of the ENLF said there could be no talks as long as what he called the genocidal attacks on Tamils continued. He described any Tamil groups agreeing to talk with Colombo at this stage as traitors.

Defense Minister Sends Message of Support to Libya

LD271826 Tehran IRNA in English 1814 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA — Iranian defence minister Thursday sent a message to the Libyan military commander-in-chief to announce the Islamic Republic's support for the anti-imperialist struggle of the Tripoli government.

In the message Colonel Mohammad Hoseyn Jalali said "The army of the Islamic Republic of Iran is prepared to stand next to the Libyan nation and the Armed Forces of the Arab Republic of Libya."

"Defence in the face of this shameless (U.S.) agression is a duty for all Islamic and revolutionary nations. (They should) give a decisive answer to the cheeky actions of these arrogant leaders".

The message was addressed to Brigadier General Abu Bakr Jabir Yunis, the commander-in-chief of the Libyan Armed Forces.

Libyan and U.S. Armed Forces clashed this week over the so-called death line in the Gulf of Sidra drewn by Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi to mark his country's territorial waters.

Jalali said "The United States which openly fights liberation movements has not yet learnt its lesson from the slap it received in the face by the Islamic Republic of Iran and Lebanon".

Foreign Ministry Condemns Arab League Resolution

LD271418 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] The Central News Unit reports that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran has issued a statement strongly condemning the Arab League resolution concerning the war imposed by the Iraqi Ba'thist regime against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Islamic Republic of Iran announced its conditions for ending the war on the 1st day the Iraqi regime attacked the borders of our Islamic land along a front more than 1,000-km-long in an attempt to topple the Islamic Republic of Iran. This resulted in the occupation of more than 20,000 square km of our land. Today, nearly 6 years since the start of this cowardly aggression, Iran still reiterates the same points: The aggressor must be punished so that aggression is uprooted once and for all and the use of aggression as a way to solve problems is ended forever. Since the world is not prepared to administer justice to the aggressor, we are determined to do the job ourselves. In this connection, the Arab League resolution will do nothing to help end the war; instead, it makes the Islamic Republic of Iran more determined to continue its honorable defense, to put out the source of the fire, and to put an end to the conspiracy. From the Islamic Republic of Iran's point of view, this league, when faced with aggression by an Arab country against the territorial integrity of a country, which has defended the Islamic and Arab goal of liberating noble Jerusalem and annihilating the Zionist enemy since the establishment of the Islamic revolution, has only reacted with silence against aggression. Some Arab countries have even encouraged and aided the aggressor. Therefore, such a league is not competent to express a view on the future of the war and how to end it. It would be better if this league were to comment on the war crimes at least as much as other countries and organizations which do not believe in Islam at all but which, when confronted with the extensive war crimes committed by the Iraqi regime, have acknowledged them. The league should force the desperate Iraqi regime to observe Islamic, humanitarian, and international laws and regulations in connection with the war.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement adds: As we have stated before, we do not have a covetous eye for even one inch of Iraqi soil or that of our other neighboring countries. To repeat the statement that continuation of the war will present a threat to the littoral countries of the Persian Gulf is nothing but a trick to involve other countries in the war and to increase the U.S. presence in the region. Iran maintains that defending its territorial integrity and throwing the aggressor out of the remaining occupied areas is its legitimate right, and this policy will be continued until the aggressor is thoroughly punished. Just as we did not wait for organizations and leagues supporting arrogant powers to pass resolutions before throwing the aggressive enemy out of our land at the start of the war, we obviously will not place any value on such resolutions as we continue our justified defense and prevent foreigners from interfering.

The bitter experience of Palestine has taught us that pinning our hopes on political games in order to regain occupied land results in nothing but disgrace and degradation. The Arab League should realize that indulging in such discussions will not achieve anything for it. We advise the league to use a fraction of its efforts to fight the Zionist enemy and at least seriously confront those Arab leaders who degrade the Arab nation even further by recommending a plan for direct negotiations with the Zionist enemy leaders.

The statement says in conclusion: Countries supporting the Iraqi regime should know that Saddam and his 'Aflaqist party are living out their last days. Therefore, we advise all these countries to think of their future interests, instead of trying to protect this doomed regime, and not to endanger the basis for improving and expanding their relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

WIH Chief Interviewed on War, Recent Offensive

LD271909 Tehran IRNA in English 1814 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] London, March 27, IRNA — A senior Iranian official spoke confidently Thursday of victory against Iraq and said the removal of Saddam Husayn from power would be a first step towards the realization of the people's freedom in that country.

The recent Iranian offensive in southern Iraq "shows that this war can have a winner (and) those who are supporting the regime of Saddam Husayn have to think of the future and do not put too much hope on him," Dr. Kamal Kharrazi said.

Kharrazi, a member of the Supreme Defence Council (SDC) and head of the War Information Headquarters [WIH] of the Islamic Republic, was speaking in an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

Asked whether Iran's conditions for ending the war were still the removal of Saddam and the destruction of the Ba'th Party, Dr Kharrazi said: "Certainly that has been one of our goals. If Saddam Husayn would be toppled down, that can be a very good step for the future.

"Basically our goal is to give this opportunity to the people of Iraq to decide their own government freely."

On fears in the Persian Gulf states of an Iranian victory, he replied: "We have declared our position officially that after the end of the war we won't have anything to do with other states and we will live together peacefully.

"The only thing that we want from them is to be neutral, not to support Saddam Husayn."

Dr Kharrazi said the United States, other Western governments and some Arab rulers in the region were backing Baghdad with arms and money. This, he said, would only jeopardize their future after Saddam's fall.

The SDC member said that international pressure that would lead to the condemnation, punishment and removal of Saddam "would be instrumental in solving the problem and ending the war."

SAIRI Leader To Station Troops on Newly Won Land

LD271626 Tehran IRNA in English 1549 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA — A leader of Iraqi opposition movement said Thursday he plans to station his troops in the recently liberated Iraqi territory on the Iranian border.

Mohammad Hakim, the head of the Supreme Assembly of Islamic Revolution of Iraq, told thousands of Iraqi POW's in a Tehran POW camp that (SAIRI) forces will be stationed in the liberated areas if political circumstances allow.

Recently the future leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Montazeri had called on Iraqi dissident groups here to take an active role in running the affairs of the liberated lands.

Hakim whose SAIRI forces are stationed in the southern marshlands and the northern Kurdistan mountains said the recent offensives inside Iraqi territories had "shaken the Iraqi regime from within".

Earlier one POW-spokesman told the gathering his comrades wish to be mobilized for war. "Iraqi prisoners call on the great leader, Imam Khomeyni, to be mobilized and sent to the war fronts to bring down the corrupt regime of Saddam".

The POW's wearing grey uniforms and squatting on blankets in front of their double bunker beds shook their fists in approval. Officials said the POW's are between 13 and 70 years of age. Wearing the long robe and the black turban of Muslim alems, Hojjat ol-Eslam Hakim also said SAIRI forces recently (?blew up) offices of the Ba'th ruling party in Al-Nasiriyah killing a group of officials.

Mohammad Hakim is the son of late Ayatollah Mohsen Hakim, one of Iraq's top theologians who led opposition to Iraq's leftist governments.

He formed SAIRI in 1982 in Tehran in an effort to bring together Iraqi Muslim forces fighting the Iraqi Ba'th regime. The assembly calls for a military solution to the Iraqi regime.

SAIRI Calls On Clergy To Strike Saddam

LD271932 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 26 Mar 86

[Text] The Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq issued a statement calling on all Iraqi refugees and seminarists studying in religious seminaries to mobilize in order to deal the final blow to the expiring body of Saddam. According to a Central News Unit report, the statement referred to the recent statement by the imam of the Islamic nation in which he graciously commanded: Our young people have now risen, but this does not mean that others should be deprived of chanting: God is great! He called on each and every Iraqi brother mujahid who has escaped with his life from the iniquity and oppression of the Ba'thist criminals to carry out his responsibilities and to take part in liberating his homeland!

In this statement, the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iraq called on fighting Iraqi clergymen to increasingly acquaint the people with their duties and elucidate their canonical responsibilities because, according to the imam of the Islamic nation, as long as this 'Aflaqite party exists we will wage war in defense of Islam!

Kurdish Attacks on Iraqi Targets Detailed

2 'Stations' Destroyed

LD271916 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 26 Mar 86

[Text] During an attack on Ba'thist forces' stations, named (Sabzi Los) and (Gol Mohammad Aqa) in the mountains north of Irbil, Iraqi Kurdish Hezbollahi peshmerga destroyed the two stations. According to reports, the Iraqi Kurdish peshmerga also opened fire on another enemy base near the Sidakan district and killed more than 10 of the Saddamist forces.

'Strategic Positions' Captured

LD271921 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 26 Mar 86

[Text] Iraq's strategic military positions in the Zakho region fell to the Muslim Iraqi Kurdish revolutionaries and were captured by the Muslim forces. According to an IRNA report, in their attacks on several military bases of the Saddamist regime in the Zakho region, over the past 3 days, the Muslim revolutionaries inflicted heavy damage on (Aqqi) and (Rastiki) bases and also on the outposts of (Garisifun) and (Simanka). In their attack on the (Usafi) base, all the troops there were killed and the equipment

of the Ba'thist enemy was destroyed and the base captured. During these operations a large amount of weapons and arms fell into the hands of the Mulim revolutionary Kurds.

According to the same report, following these successful operations, the Iraqi regime in a fit of insane frenzy used four helicopters and heavy artillery to shell the villages of Jum-e Jahan, Al-Ghali, (Hisu), [name indistinct] and (Bishir), and inflicted losses and damage on them.

Reportage on Combat Operations in War With Iraq

Iraqi Commander Said Killed

LD271322 Tehran IRNA in English 1304 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] Khatam ol-Anbiya', March 27, IRNA — Iranian planes Thursday bombed Iraqi supply routes and command centers in southern war front while Iraqi POW's said one of their top military commanders has been killed in fighting in the area.

Reports from Khatam ol-Anbiya' operational command said Iranian jet planes bombed the strategic Basra-Al-Faw highway at 8:30 (0530 GMT) creating "a hell of fire and smoke".

One hour later the bombers returned to hit Iraqi command and troop concentration centers on the Basra-Al-Bihar road.

Both warring countries have been reporting heavy fighting in Iraq's southern Al-Faw peninsula since early last month when Iran's Muslim combatants crossed the Arvand River and cut Iraq's access to open sea.

The Khatam ol-Anbiya' report said all Iranian planes returned safely to their bases after causing large casualties and extensive damages.

Meanwhile an Iraqi plane brought down near Al-Sulaymaniyah in northern Iraq Wednesday has been identified as a Soviet-built MIG-23. IRNA had earlier reported the downing of the aircraft and the death of its pilot.

In southern Iranian city of Ahvaz recently captured Iraqi POW's said Brigadier Khazr 'Ali Nasar, the commander of the First Brigade of the Presidential Guards, has been killed in fighting in Al-Faw.

They said the brigadier, a brother to Iraq's Minsiter of Trade Hasan 'Ali [al-Amiri], had led several unsuccessful counteroffensives in the area. Nasar, a member of the Joint Staff, has been buried in Baghdad.

On Wednesday Iraq's Defence Minister 'Adnan Khayrallah [Talfah] said his planned Al-Faw counter-offensives against Iranian forces will "take a long time". The comment indicates the Iraqi Command has lost hope in the battle of Al-Faw.

Saddam started the war in September 1980 in what he called a three-day blitz.

Communique No 2422

LD271653 Tehran IRNA in English 1640 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, MARCH 27, IRNA — Artillery guns of the Islamic Republic Thursday pounded Iraqi industrial and economic installations in the western front and continued duels in other sectors of the 1,200 km confrontation line.

The daily war comunique here said the "destructive fire of the Islamic combatants damaged the industrial and economic installations of Naft Khaneh and Banmil".

Artillery and aerial bombardment of industrial and military centers has flared up recently.

The communique said some 15 Iraqi troops were killed and 45 other wounded when their bunkers were raided by Iran's Muslim combat-patrols in the Kharratha region of the western front.

But it added that two Iraqi patrols in Kani-Sheykh and Salehabad of the western front and another patrols in (Harnah) region of the northern front were forced to flee the fire of the combatants.

Four Iraqi troops were captured in the southern front when they tried to infiltrate Iranian positions.

The Joint Staff headquarters issues a communique every day to report latest developments of the battle that has been raging between the two countries for the past five and half years.

The Communique Number 2422 said light and heavy weaponary duels continued between the two sides on all fronts.

Fighting was reported heavier near the towns of Sumar, Naft Shah and Qasr-e Shirin in the west, and in the regions of Sharhani, Chazzabeh, Talaiyeh and (Khejbar) Islands of the south.

3 Iraqi MIG's Downed

LD271844 Tehran IRNA in English 1839 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA — Three Iraqi war planes were downed Thursday over the Persian Gulf during a large supply operation by the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps.

The three Soviet built MIG-23 planes were shot down as the IRGC [Islamic Revolution Guards Corps] moved "a large military caravan across the Persian Gulf" to the Al-Faw peninsula in southern Iraq, according to the Khatam ol-Anbiya' military headquarters.

"The planes of the Iraqi regime engaged the vessels of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps but were downed by heavy anti-aircraft fire" the command said.

Iran launched its Val-Fajr-8 (Dawn-8) offensive across the Arvand River early last month to capture the port city of Al-Faw and its surroundings.

Since the begining of the offensive Iran has reported downing 73 Iraqi aircrafts in the area.

Further on Air Attacks

LD271848 Tehran IRNA in English 1834 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] Tehran, March 27, IRNA — Iranian aircrafts bombed Iraqi artillery positions and concentration centers on the Basara-Bihar road at 11:15 (07:45 GMT) Thursday, a report from Khatam ol-Anbiya' military headquarters said.

The fighters later bombed Iraqi armoured units and concentration centers on the Al-Faw-'Umm Qasr highway in Iraq's southern Al-Faw peninsula at 14:30 (11:00 GMT).

Government Worker Reportedly Stage Slowdowns

GF271751 (Clandestine) Voice of the Liberation of Iran in Persian 1630 GMT 27 Mar 86

[Text] According to one of our correspondents from the capital, protests from government employees — due to their maltreatment by the regime — is another problem gaining wider dimensions daily, which the ruling mullahs are unable to resolve. Our correspondent sent us a confirmed report stating that the employees of the Tehran area power department went on strike last Thursday following repeated work slowdowns to protest their remuneration and facilities. They requested that the Islamic government pay attention to their demands. During this time, the local komiteh officials — under instructions from the regime's energy minister Dr Banki — forced and threatened these employees to go to work. According to our correspondent, the situation in the Tehran power department is tense and it is likely there will be an exacerbation of the explosive situation in this sensitive government organization.